



Biomes of the World

Investigation

A. Look through the list of some of the world's biomes and their major characteristics. Based on your experience, determine which biome best describes Southern California.

	Tropical Rain Forests	Tropical Savannah	Desert
Climate	High temperatures and rainfall Rainfall: 60" to 160" a year.	High temperatures year-round, with 4 to 8 months of drought.	Day: high temperatures. Night: extreme cold. Little rain.
Soil	Rapid decomposition. Nutrient poor, acidic with high levels of aluminum and iron oxides. Reddish in color.	Acidic. Reddish in color.	High content of salt. Sand is common. Light brown, gray in color.
Vegetation	Complex forest with as many as five layers. Broad- leaf evergreens and vines.	Grassland with scattered trees. Acacia, baobab, palm and grasses.	Low-level shrubs, cactus.
Animals	Apes, monkeys, leopards.	Giraffe, antelope, lion.	Reptiles, snakes and burrowing rodents.
Location	Low-lying areas near the equator, between 10° North and South latitude.	Often on either side of rain forests, located on the African and South American continents.	Various locations including west coasts between 20° to 30° latitude, interiors of continents, and the leeward side of high mountain ranges.

	Mediterranean	Temperate Grassland	Temperate Deciduous Forest
Climate	Six months each: hot, dry summers; cool, moist winters.	Warm to hot summers, cool to very cold winters.	Warm summers, cold winters. Abundant rain year-round.
Soil	Thin rocky soils on hillsides.	Typically alkaline soils. Blackish in color.	Rich in organic materials. Slightly acidic surface soil. Dark brown in color.
Vegetation	Chaparral adapted to fire. Evergreen shrubs charac- terized by small, waxy leaves.	Short grasses.	Primarily deciduous trees: oak, hickory, maple, and ash.
Animals	Deer, rabbit, mountain lion.	Depending on continent: bison, camels, elephants.	Deer, bear, squirrel, raccoon.
Location	Western coastal regions located between 30° to 40°, North and South latitude.	Near desert areas, mid-latitude in North America, South America, Eurasia, South Africa.	Northern hemisphere locations in Eastern North America, West/Central Europe and Eastern Asia.

B. Which biome did you choose? Explain your answer.

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